Goals and Ground Rules

First (?) Explorer Program Retreat

Paul Hertz

Explorer Program Scientist

Office of Space Science

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Motivation

- (Almost) Every recent Explorer project has been challenged to meet its science objectives while staying within its cost and schedule commitments.

- Recently launched missions like CHIPS and GALEX, and the upcoming mission Swift, have all had serious challenges.

- Missions still in formulation, like AIM and WISE, are working hard to control their costs and schedules.

- We have had to forego the exciting science of FAME and SPIDR for various reasons.
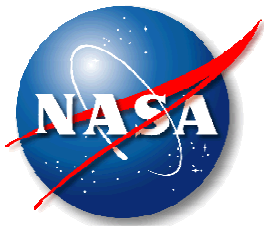
Methodology

- Although every mission is different, and problems are unique, are there underlying lessons to be learned about developing challenging missions in a cost capped environment?

- Discuss issues and concerns affecting the Explorer Program in its entirety, as well as asking individual missions to share lessons learned.

- Provide an opportunity for an exchange of information between missions and NASA, and between missions near completion and those in the formulation or early implementation phase.

Goals

- Share lessons learned between the Explorer projects, the Explorer Program Office at GSFC, and the Explorer team at NASA HQ

- Draw upon recent Explorer projects in order to ensure the success of future Explorer missions.

- Identify ways that NASA (HQ, GSFC, LaRC) can better support Explorer missions – especially the balance between PI-led missions and NASA oversight.

- Identify early warning signs of future problems.

- Avoid unintentionally or unknowingly building in risk.

Ground Rules

- Speakers will stimulate discussion --- and the discussion is as important as the presentations
- Sometimes names must be mentioned --- keep it professional --- no personalities
  - Discuss risks and outcomes, not people and institutions
  - Thank you to presenters who will discuss their problems and bad luck and mistakes
- Contribute to the discussion
  - Similar experiences or other commonalities
  - Solutions or mitigations
- Actions may arise from the discussion --- try and identify them explicitly